

Ancient Grains Make a Comeback

Variety!

Try mixing ancient grains such as millet (pictured) into your meals.

Did you enjoy a summer salad with red, yellow or green heirloom tomatoes this year? They have made a big comeback on the American plate. Similar to the increased demand for heirloom tomatoes, people want to eat more heirloom grains or “ancient” grains.

What is an ancient grain? There is no official definition, according to the Whole Grains Council. However, they loosely define ancient grains as grains that are largely unchanged over the last several hundred years.

This means that modern wheat, which is constantly bred and changed, is not an ancient grain. Spelt though, would be considered an ancient grain in the wheat family.

Heirloom varieties of other common grains such as black barley, red and black rice, blue corn—could also be considered ancient grains. More unusual grains such as amaranth, sorghum, teff, millet and quinoa are also considered ancient grains.

Did you know that rice can be red or black and corn can be blue? Heirloom grains can provide a new way to incorporate grains into your diet.
(Pictured: red rice)



Half of All the Grains You Eat Should be Whole Grains

Most Americans consume enough grains, but few are **whole** grains. At least half of all the grains you eat should be **whole** grains. Color is not an indication of a whole grain. For example, bread can be brown because of molasses or other added ingredients.

Also, don't be fooled by fancy names on food packages. Read the ingredient list to see if a whole-grain ingredient is listed first. Foods labeled with words "multi-grain," "stone-ground" "100% wheat," "cracked wheat," "seven-grain," or "bran" are usually not whole-grain products.

Look for foods that name one of the following whole grains first on the label's ingredient list:

- brown rice
- buckwheat
- bulgur
- millet
- oatmeal
- popcorn
- quinoa
- rolled oats
- whole-grain barley
- whole-grain corn
- whole-grain sorghum
- whole-grain triticale
- whole oats
- whole rye
- whole wheat
- wild rice¹



Quinoa: Ancient Grain of the Andean Region

Quinoa (pronounced "keen-wah") was cultivated in the Andes Mountains of Bolivia, Chile, and Peru by pre-Columbian cultures some 5,000 years ago and continues to be grown today. After maize, it has occupied the most prominent place among Andean grains. Quinoa was critical to the Andean diet because it could survive in high altitudes, withstand frost, intense sun and drought. The plant is very nutritious. It's easy to cook and use in mixed dishes. The content and quality of its proteins are outstanding and comparable to milk protein.

The price of quinoa tripled from 2006 to 2013 as America and Europe discovered this new superfood. The growing export demand for quinoa has generally been good for farmers in Bolivia and Peru—but the demand has focused on very few of the 3,000 or so different varieties of quinoa, prompting farmers to abandon many of those varieties.^{2 3}

Quinoa means "mother grain" in the Inca language. It's versatile and nutritious. Use it in salads, soups, cooked cereal, meatloaf and smoothies.

What's the Difference Between Whole and Refined Grains?

Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel—the fiber rich outer bran layer, the nutrient packed germ and the starchy endosperm.

Refined grains such as white flour and white rice have been milled to remove the bran and germ. This is done to give grains a finer texture and improve their shelf life.

Oral Health: It's More Than Healthy Teeth



What does oral health—or having a healthy mouth—mean to you? Is it a mouth free of pain? White teeth and fresh breath? Dentures that fit properly? The ability to chew your favorite foods?

While strong, healthy teeth are important, oral health includes much more. Your

tongue, lips, jaw and even the amount of saliva in your mouth are all important for good oral health. If you've had a swollen lip, a sore on your tongue, a tight jaw or a dry mouth—you understand how all the parts need to work together.

But...did you know that oral health impacts your **overall** health? Gum disease, also known as periodontal disease, can cause complications with diabetes and is also linked to an increased risk of heart and lung disease. Tender or bleeding gums, continual bad breath, and loose teeth are common signs and symptoms of gum disease.

So, keep your mouth healthy!

- **Brush your teeth twice a day with a soft toothbrush.** Soft bristles are delicate enough to gently sweep underneath your gums, which is where plaque and germs like to hide.
- **Use a fluoride toothpaste.** Fluoride prevents decay at every age and can also reduce tooth sensitivity.
- **Clean between your teeth once a day using floss or a toothpick.** It is most important to find a tool that is easy for you to use between your teeth.
- **Add a little crunch between meals.** Crunchy snacks like fresh fruit and vegetables are lower in sugar and are less likely to cause tooth decay. Sugary, sticky foods are likely to remain on the teeth longer and increase the risk of cavities.
- **Visit your dentist** at least once a year or as recommended by your dental provider.

Want another reason to visit the dentist? Nearly 3 out of 4 adults age 65 and older have gum disease. Also known as periodontal disease, this chronic, sometimes silent disease leads to tooth loss and is linked to diabetes, lung and heart disease.



Testimonial

Annie L. Little, retired school teacher, was introduced to healthy foods from her mother and Grandma Bell. They raised fresh vegetables and knew “fresh was best” many years ago.

Annie began cooking at an early age using herbs in vegetables, meats, and teas. Her family grew herbs in their garden and she learned how to dry and store herbs for use during the winter and spring.

Annie regularly attends *Fresh Conversations* meetings. When “Eating with Fresh Herbs” was presented in June, Annie shared tips on how to dry and store fresh herbs.

Basil is one of her favorite herbs. She uses it in Italian cuisine such as spaghetti, pesto, and pizza sauce. Annie also uses sage, thyme, dill, mint, and rosemary to make her dishes extra “tasty.”

But Annie's commitment to healthy aging goes beyond cooking healthy food—she swims and exercises at the YMCA three times a week. And what is her new adventure? Yoga classes!

Annie L. Little is an active community volunteer at a long-term care facility and an active Horizons Healthy Aging dining site recruiter among African-American older adults.



Recipe of the Month

Tomato, Cucumber, and Quinoa Salad

Is your neighbor still giving you tomatoes from his garden? Here is a delicious way to use them with a nutritious ancient grain, quinoa.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup quinoa
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
- Salt and black pepper
- ½ pound tomatoes, cut up
- ½ English cucumber, sliced*
- 4 cups baby arugula* (about 3 ounces)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Cook the quinoa according to the package directions; let cool.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the oil, vinegar, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Add the quinoa, tomatoes, cucumber, and arugula and toss to combine, season with ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper.⁴

*Substitute with any cucumber or lettuce you have on hand. Add fresh herbs and less salt to reduce sodium.
Reprinted from *Real Simple*.



Name the Grain

Decode the following words to uncover five ancient grains.

| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M |
|----|---|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|
| 12 | 5 | 19 | 10 | 3 | 21 | 17 | 23 | 14 | 24 | 2 | 26 | 15 |

| N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
|----|---|----|---|---|----|----|---|----|----|---|----|---|
| 22 | 7 | 25 | 9 | 1 | 18 | 11 | 6 | 13 | 20 | 4 | 16 | 8 |

1. One of the earliest cultivated crops, it is a staple in Africa, China, and India.⁵

15 14 26 26 3 11

2. This was called the “mother of all grains” by the Incas.⁵

9 6 14 22 7 12

3. This contains a wider variety of nutrients than wheat, including more protein, folate, magnesium, and selenium.⁵

18 25 3 26 11

4. It is not actually a type of wheat. This is a fruit seed that is related to rhubarb and sorrel.⁵

5 6 19 2 20 23 3 12 11

5. It is one of the earliest known food plants and was cultivated by the Aztecs and Incas.⁵

12 15 12 1 12 22 11 23

References

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- ² Oelke, E.A., Putnam, D.H., Teynor, T.M., and E.S. Oplinger. “Quinoa.” Alternative Field Crops Manual. Retrieved July 1, 2016. <https://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/afcm/quinoa.html>.
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- ⁴ “Tomato, Cucumber, and Quinoa Salad.” Retrieved July 1, 2016. <http://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/browse-all-recipes/tomato-cucumber-quinoa-salad#comments>.
- ⁵ “Ancient Grains.” Retrieved July 1, 2016. <http://us.naturespath.com/healthy-foods/ingredients/ancient-grains>.

Take Action Corner

This month I will...

- Name the Grain Answers
1. Millet
 2. Quinoa
 3. Spelt
 4. Buckwheat
 5. Amaranth



Food Assistance can help you buy healthy food in Iowa. Visit <http://dhs.iowa.gov/food-assistance> for more information or contact your local Department of Human Services office. This material was developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health and funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

